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# THE IRISH PENNY JOURNAL.

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VOLUME I.



## THE IRISH MIDWIFE. — PART II.

BY WILLIAM CARLETON.

THE village of Ballycomaisy was as pleasant a little place as one might wish to see of a summer's day. To be sure, like all other Irish villages, it was remarkable for a superfluity of "pigs, praties, and childre," which being the stock in trade of an Irish cabin, it is to be presumed that very few villages either in Ireland or elsewhere could go on properly without them. It consisted principally of one long street, which you entered from the north-west side by one of those old-fashioned bridges, the arches of which were much more akin to the Gothic than the Roman. Most of the houses were of mud, a few of stone, one or two of which had the honour of being slated on the front side of the roof, and rustically thatched on the back, where ostentation was not necessary. There were two or three shops, a liberal sprinkling of public-houses, a chapel a little out of the town, and an old dilapida-

ted market-house near the centre. A few little bye-streets projected in a lateral direction from the main one, which was terminated on the side opposite to the north-west by a pound, through which, as usual, ran a shallow stream, that was gathered into a little gutter as it crossed the road. A crazy antiquated mill, all covered and cobwebbed with grey mealy dust, stood about a couple of hundred yards out of the town, to which two straggling rows of houses, that looked like an abortive street, led you. This mill was surrounded by a green common, which was again hemmed in by a fine river, that ran round in a curving line from under the hunchbacked arch of the bridge we mentioned at the beginning. Now, a little behind, or rather above this mill, on the skirt of the aforesaid common, stood a rather neat-looking whitish cabin, with about half a rood of garden behind it. It was but

small, and consisted merely of a sleeping-room and kitchen. On one side of the door there was a window, opening on hinges; and on the outside, to the right as you entered the house, there was placed a large stone, about four feet high, backed by a sloping mound of earth, so graduated as to allow a person to ascend the stone without any difficulty. In this cabin lived Rose Moan, the Midwife; and we need scarcely inform our readers that the stone in question was her mounting-stone, by which she was enabled to place herself on pillion or crupper, as the case happened, when called out upon her usual avocation.

Rose was what might be called a *flahoolagh*, or portly woman, with a good-humoured set of Milesian features; that is to say, a pair of red, broad cheeks, a well-set nose, allowing for the disposition to turn up, and two black twinkling eyes, with a mellow expression that betokened good nature, and a peculiar description of knowing professional humour that is never to be met with in any but a Midwife. Rose was dressed in a red flannel petticoat, a warm cotton sack or wrapper, which pinned easily over a large bust, and a comfortable woollen shawl. She always wore a long-bordered morning cap, over which, while travelling, she pinned a second shawl of Scotch plaid; and to protect her from the cold night air, she enfolded her precious person in a deep blue cloak of the true indigo tint. On her head, over cloak and shawl and morning cap, was fixed a black "splush hat," with the leaf strapped down by her ears on each side, so that in point of fact she cared little how it blew, and never once dreamed that such a process as that of Raper or Mackintosh was necessary to keep the liege subjects of these realms warm and waterproof, nor that two systems should exist in Ireland so strongly antithetical to each other as those of Raper and Father Mathew.

Having thus given a brief sketch of her local habitation and personal appearance, we shall transfer our readers to the house of a young new-married farmer named Keho, who lived in a distant part of the parish. Keho was a comfortable fellow, full of good nature and credulity; but his wife happened to be one of the sharpest, meanest, most suspicious, and miserable devils that ever was raised in good-humoured Ireland. Her voice was as sharp and her heart as cold as an icicle; and as for her tongue, it was incessant and interminable. Were it not that her husband, who, though good-natured, was fiery and resolute when provoked, exercised a firm and salutary control over her, she would have starved both him and her servants into perfect skeletons. And what was still worse, with a temper that was vindictive and tyrannical, she affected to be religious, and upon those who did not know her, actually attempted to pass herself off as a saint.

One night, about ten or twelve months after his marriage, honest Corny Keho came out to the barn, where slept his two farm servants, named Phil Hannigan and Barney Casey. He had been sitting by himself, composing his mind for a calm night's sleep, or probably for a curtain lecture, by taking a contemplative whiff of the pipe, when the servant wench, with a certain air of hurry, importance, and authority, entered the kitchen, and informed him that Rose Moan must immediately be sent for.

"The mistress isn't well, Masther, an' the sooner she's sint for, the better. So mind my words, sir, if you please, an' pack aff either Phil or Barney for Rose Moan, an' I hope I won't have to ax it again—hem!"

Dandy Keho—for so Corny was called, as being remarkable for his slovenliness—started up hastily, and having taken the pipe out of his mouth, was about to place it on the hob; but reflecting that the whiff could not much retard him in the delivery of his orders, he sallied out to the barn, and knocked.

"Who's there? Lave that, wid you, unless you wish to be shotted." This was followed by a loud laugh from within.

"Boys, get up wid all haste: it's the mistress, Phil, saddle Hollowback and fly—(puff)—fly in a jiffy for Rose Moan; an' do you, Barney, clap a back-sugaun—(puff)—an' Sobersides, an' be aff for the Misthress's mother—(puff.)"

Both were dressing themselves before he had concluded, and in a very few minutes were off in different directions, each according to the orders he had received. With Barney we have nothing to do, unless to say that he lost little time in bringing Mrs Keho's mother to her aid; but as Phil is gone for a much more important character, we beg our readers to

return with us to the cabin of Rose Moan, who is now fast asleep; for it is twelve o'clock of a beautiful moonlight night, in the pleasant month of August. Tap-tap. "Is Mrs Moan at home?" In about half a minute her warm good-looking face, enveloped in flannel, is protruded from the window.

"Who's that, in God's name?" The words in italics were added, lest the message might be one from the fairies.

"I'm Dandy Keho's servant—one of them, at any rate—an' my Misthress has got a stitch in her side—ha! ha! ha!"

"Aisy, avick—so, she's down, thin—aisy—I'll be wid you like a bow out of an arrow. Put your horse over to 'the stone,' an' have him ready. The Lord bring her over her difficulties, any way, amin!"

She then pulled in her head, and in about three or four minutes sallied out, dressed as we have described her; and having placed herself on the crupper, coolly put her right arm round Phil's body, and desired him to ride on with all possible haste.

"Push an, avouchal, push an—time's precious at all times, but on business like this every minute is worth a life. But there's always one comfort, that God is merciful. Push forrid, avick."

"Never fear, Mrs Moan. If it's in Hollowback, bedad I'm the babe that 'll take it out of him. Come, ould Hackball, trot out—you don't know the message you're an, nor who you're carryin'."

"Isn't your mistress—manin' the Dandy's wife—a daughter of ould Fitzy Finnegan's, the schrew of Glendhu?"

"Faith, you may say that, Rose, as we all know to our cost. Be me song, she does have us sometimes that you might see through us; an' only for the masther—but, dang it, no matter—she's down now, poor woman, an' it's not just the time to be rakin' up her failins'."

"It is not, an' God mark you to grace for sayin' so. At a time like this we must forget every thing, only to do the best we can for our fellow-creatures. What are you lookin' at, avick?"

Now, this question naturally arose from the fact that honest Phil had been, during their short conversation, peering keenly on each side of him, as if he expected an apparition to rise from every furze-bush on the common. The truth is, he was almost proverbial for his terror of ghosts and fairies, and all supernatural visitants whatever; but upon this occasion his fears arose to a painful height, in consequence of the popular belief, that, when a midwife is sent for, the Good People throw every possible obstruction in her way, either by laming the horse, if she rides, or by disqualifying the guide from performing his duty as such. Phil, however, felt ashamed to avow his fears on these points, but still could not help unconsciously turning the conversation to the very topic he ought to have avoided.

"What war you looking at, avick?"

"Why, bedad, there appeared something there beyant, like a man, only it was darker. But be this and be that—hem, ehem!—if I could get my hands on him, whatsoever he—"

"Hushth, boy, bould your tongue: you don't know but it's the very word you war goin' to say might do us harm."

"—Whatsoever he is, that I'd give him a lift on Hollowback if he happened to be any poor fellow that stood in need of it. Oh! the sorra word I was goin' to say against any thing or any body."

"You're right, dear. If you knew as much as I could tell you—push an—you'd have a dhrop o' sweat at the ind of every hair on your head."

"Be my song, I'm tould you know a power o' quare things, Mrs Moan; an' if all that's said is throe, you sartainly do."

Now, had Mrs Moan and her heroic guide passed through the village of Ballycomaisy, the latter would not have felt his fears so strong upon him. The road, however, along which they were now going was a grass-grown *bohreen*, that led them from behind her cabin through a waste and lonely part of the country; and as it was a saving of better than two miles in point of distance, Mrs Moan would not hear of their proceeding by any other direction. The tenor of her conversation, however, was fast bringing Phil to the state she so graphically and pitifully described.

"What's your name?" she asked.

"Phil Hannigan, a son of fat Phil's of Balnasaggart, an' a cousin to Paddy who lost a finger in the Gansy (Guernsey) wars."

"I know. Well, Phil, in throth the hairs 'ud stand like

stalks o' barley upon your head, if you heard all I could mintion."

Phil instinctively put his hand up and pressed down his hat, as if it had been disposed to fly from off his head.

"Hem! ahem! Why, I'm tould it's wonderful. But is it thrue, Mrs Moan, that you have been brought on *business* to some o' the"—here Phil looked about him cautiously, and lowered his voice to a whisper—"to some o' the fairy women?"

"Husth, man alive—what the sorra tempted you to call them anything but the Good People? This day's Thursday—God stand betune us an' harm. No, Phil, I name nobody. But there was a woman, a midwife—mind, avick, that I don't say *who* she was—may be I know why too, an' may be it would be as much as my life is worth"—

"Aisey, Mrs Moan! God presarve us! what is that tall thing there to the right!"—and he commenced the Lord's Prayer in Irish as fast as he could get out the words.

"Why, don't you see, boy, its a fir-tree, but sorra movin' it's movin'."

"Ay, faix, an' so it is; bedad I thought it was gettin' taller an' taller. Ay!—but! it is only a tree."

"Well, dear, there was a woman, an' she was called away one night by a little gentleman dressed in green. I'll tell you the story some time—only this, that havin' done her *duty*, an' tuck no payment, she was called out the same night to a neighbour's wife, an' a purtier boy you couldn't see than she left behind her. But it seems she happened to touch one of his eyes wid a hand that had a taste of *their* panado an' it; an' as the child grew up, every one wondhered to hear him speak of the multitudes o' thim that he seen in all directions. Well, my dear, he kept never sayin' anything to them until one day when he was in the fair of Ballycomaisy, that he saw them whippin' away meal and cotton and butter, an' everything that they thought serviceable to them; so you see he could hould in no longer, an' says he to a little fellow that was very active an' thievish among them, 'Why d'uv you take what doesn't belong to you?' says he. The little fellow looked up at him"—

"God be about us, Rose, what is that white thing goin' along the ditch to the left of us?"

"It's a sheep, don't you see? Faix, I believe you're cowardly at night."

"Ay, faix, an' so it is, but it looked very quare somehow."

"—An' says he, 'How do you know that?' 'Bekase I see you all,' says the other. 'An' which eye do you see us all wid?' says he again. 'Why, wid the left,' says the boy. Wid that he gave a short whiff of a blast up into the eye, an' from that day not a stime the poor boy was never able to see wid it. No, Phil, I didn't say it was *myself*—I named *nobody*."

"An', Mrs Moan, is it thrue that you can put the dughgaughs upon them that trate their wives badly?"

"Whisht, Phil. When you marry, keep your timper—that's all.—You knew long Ned Donnelly?"

"Ay, bedad, sure enough; there was quare things said about"—

"Push an, avick, push an; for who knows how some of us is wanted? You have a good masher, I believe, Phil? It's poison the same Ned would give me if he could. Push an, dear."

Phil felt that he had got his answer. The abrupt mystery of her manner and her curt allusions left him little indeed to guess at. In this way did the conversation continue, Phil feloniously filching, as he thought, from her own lips, a corroboration of the various knowledge and extraordinary powers which she was believed to possess, and she ingeniously feeding his credulity, merely by enigmatical hints and masked allusions; for although she took care to affirm nothing directly or personally of herself, yet did she contrive to answer him in such a manner as to confirm every report that had gone abroad of the strange purposes she could effect.

"Phil, wasn't there an uncle o' yours up in the Mountain Bar that didn't live happily for some time wid his wife?"

"I believe so, Rose; but it was before my time, or any way when I was only a young shaver."

"An' did you ever hear how the reconcilment came betune them?"

"No, bedad," replied Phil, "I never did; an' that's no wondher, for it was a thing they never liked to spake of."

"Throth, it's thrue for you, boy. Well, I brought about—Push an, dear, push an.—They're as happy a couple now as breaks bread, any way, and that's all they wanted."

"I'd wager a thirteen it was you did that, Rose."

"Hut, gorsoon, hould your tongue. Sure they're happy now, I say, whosomever did it. I named nobody, nor I take

no pride to-myself, Phil, out o' sich things. Some people's gifted above others, an' that's all. But, Phil?"

"Well, ma'am?"

"How does the Dandy an' his scald of a wife agree? for, throth, I'm tould she's nothing else."

"Faix, but middlin' itself. As I tould you, she often has us as empty as a paper lantern, wid devil a thing but the light of a good conscience inside of us. If we *pray* ourselves, be-gorra she'll take care we'll have the *fastin'* at first cost; so that you see, ma'am, we hould a devout situation undher her."

"An' so that's the way wid you?"

"Ay, the downright thruth, an' no mistake. Why, the stirabout she makes would run nine miles along a deal board, an' scald a man at the far end of it."

"Throth, Phil, I never like to go next or near sich women or sich places, but for the sake o' the innocent we must forget the guilty. So push an, avick, push an. Who knows but it's life an' death wid us? Have you ne'er a spur on?"

"The devil a spur I tuck time to wait for."

"Well, afther all, it's not right to let a messenger come for a woman like me, widout what is called the Midwife's Spur—a spur in the head—for it has long been said that one in the head is worth two in the heel, an' so indeed it is,—on business like this, any way."

"Mrs Moan, do you know the Moriarty's of Ballaghmore, ma'am?"

"Which o' them, honey?"

"Mick o' the Esker Beg."

"To be sure I do. A well-favoured dacent family they are, an' full o' the world too, the Lord spare it to them."

"Bedad, they are, ma'am, a well-favoured\* family. Well, ma'am, isn't it odd, but somehow there's neither man, woman, nor child in the parish but gives you the good word above all the women in it; but as for a midwife, why, I heard my aunt say that if ever mother an' child owed their lives to another, she did her and the babby's to you."

The reader may here perceive that Phil's flattery must have had some peculiar design in it, in connection with the Moriarty's, and such indeed was the fact. But we had better allow him to explain matters himself.

"Well, honey, sure that was but my duty; but God be praised for all, for every thing depends on the Man above. She should call in one o' those newfangled women who take out their Dispatches from the Lying-in College in Dublin below; for you see, Phil, there is sich a place there—an' it stands to raison that there should be a Fondlin' Hospital beside it, which there is too, they say; but, honey, what are these poor ignorant cratures but *new lights*, every one o' them, that a dacent woman's life isn't safe wid?"

"To be sure, Mrs Moan; an' every one knows they're not to be put in comparishment wid a woman like you, that knows sich a power. But how does it happen, ma'am, that the Moriarty's does be spakin' but middlin' of you?"

"Of me, avick?"

"Ay, faix; I'm tould they spread the mouth at you sometimes, espishly when the people does be talkin' about all the quare things you can do."

"Well, well, dear, let them have their laugh—they may laugh that win, you know. Still one doesn't like to be provoked—no indeed."

"Faix, an' Mick Moriarty has a purty daughther, Mrs Moan, an' a purty penny he can give her, by all accounts. The nerra one o' myself but would be glad to put my comedher on her, if I knew how. I hope you find yourself aisey on your sate, ma'am?"

"I do, honey. Let them talk, Phil, let them talk; it may come their turn yet—only I didn't expect it from *them*. You! hut, avick, what chance would you have with Mick Moriarty's daughther?"

"Ay, every chance an' sartinty too, if some one that I know, and that every one that knows her, respects, would only give me a lift. There's no use in comin' about the bush, Mrs Moan—bedad it's yourself I mane. You could do it. An', whisper, betune you and me it would be only sarvin' them right, in regard of the way they spake of you—sayin', indeed, an' galivantin' to the world that you know no more than another woman, an' that odd Pol Doolin of Ballymagan knows oceans more than you do."

This was perhaps as artful a plot as could be laid for engaging the assistance of Mrs Moan in Phil's design upon

\* This term in Ireland means "handsome"—"good-looking."

Moriarty's daughter. He knew perfectly well that she would not, unless strongly influenced, lend herself to any thing of the kind between two persons whose circumstances in life differed so widely as those of a respectable farmer's daughter with a good portion, and a penniless labouring boy. With great adroitness, therefore, he contrived to excite her prejudices against them by the most successful arguments he could possibly use, namely, a contempt for her imputed knowledge, and praise of her rival. Still she was in the habit of acting coolly, and less from impulse than from a shrewd knowledge of the best way to sustain her own reputation, without undertaking too much.

"Well, honey, an' so you wish me to assist you? Maybe I could do it, and maybe—But push an, dear, move him an; we'll think of it, an' spake more about it some other time. I must think of what's afore me now—so move, move, acushla; push an."

Much conversation of the same nature took place between them, in which each bore a somewhat characteristic part; for to say truth, Phil was as knowing a "boy" as you might wish to become acquainted with. In Rose, however, he had a woman of no ordinary shrewdness to encounter; and the consequence was, that each after a little more chat began to understand the other a little too well to render the topic of the Moriartys, to which Phil again reverted, so interesting as it had been. Rose soon saw that Phil was only a *plasthey*, or sweetener, and only "soothered" her for his own purposes; and Phil perceived that Rose understood his tactics too well to render any further tampering with her vanity either safe or successful.

At length they arrived at Dandy Keho's house, and in a moment the Dandy himself took her in his arms, and, placing her gently on the ground, shook hands with and cordially welcomed her. It is very singular, but no less true, that the moment a midwife enters the house of her patient, she always uses the plural number, whether speaking in her own person or in that of the former.

"You're welcome, Rose, an' I'm proud an' happy to see you here, an' it'll make poor Bridget strong, an' give her courage, to know you're near her."

"How are we, Dandy? how are we, avick?"

"Oh, bedad, middlin', wishin' very much for you of coorse, as I hear!"

"Well, honey, go away now. I have some words to say afore I go in, that'll sarve us, maybe—a charm it is that has great virtue in it."

The Dandy then withdrew to the barn, where the male portion of the family were staying until the *ultimatum* should be known. A good bottle of potteen, however, was circulating among them, for every one knows that occasions of this nature usually generate a festive and hospitable spirit.

Rose now went round the house in the direction from east to west, stopping for a short time at each of the windows, which she marked with the sign of the cross five times; that is to say, once at each corner and once in the middle. At each corner also of the house she signed the cross, and repeated the following words or charm:—

The four Evangels and the four Divines,  
God bless the moon an us when it shines.  
New moon,\* true moon, God bless me,  
God bless this house an' this family.  
Matthew, Mark, Luke, an' John,  
God bless the bed that she lies on.  
God bless the manger where Christ was born,  
An' lave joy an' comfort here in the morn.  
St Bridget an' St Patrick, an' the holy spouse,  
Keep the fairies for ever far from this house. Amen.  
Glora yea, Glora yea, Glora yea yeelish.  
Glora n'ahir, Glora n'vac, Glora n' spirid neev. Amen.

These are the veritable words of the charm, which she uttered in the manner and with the forms aforesaid. Having concluded them, she then entered into the house, where we leave her for a time with our best wishes.

In the barn the company were very merry, Dandy himself being as pleasant as any of them, unless when his brow became shaded by the very natural anxiety for the welfare of his wife and child, which from time to time returned upon him. Stories were told, songs sung, and jokes passed, all full of good nature and not a little fun, some of it at the expense of the Dandy himself, who laughed at and took it all in good part. An occasional *bulletin* came out through a servant maid, that matters were just the same way; a piece of intelligence which

damped Keho's mirth considerably. At length he himself was sent for by the Midwife, who wished to speak with him at the door.

"I hope there's nothing like danger, Rose?"

"Not at all, honey; but the truth is, we want a seventh son who isn't left-handed."

"A seventh son! Why, what do you want him for?"

"Why, dear, just to give her three shakes in his arms;—it never fails."

"Bedad, an' that's fortunate; for there's Mickey M'Sorley of the Broad Bog's a seventh son, an' he's not two gunshots from this."

"Well, aroon, hurry off one or two o' the boys for him, and tell Phil, if he makes haste, that I'll have a word to say to him afore I go." This intimation to Phil put feathers to his heels; for from the moment that he and Barney started, he did not once cease to go at the top of his speed. It followed as a matter of course that honest Micky M'Sorley dressed himself and was back at Keho's house before the family believed it possible the parties could have been there. This ceremony of getting a seventh son to shake the sick woman, in cases where difficulty or danger may be apprehended, is one which frequently occurs in remote parts of the country. To be sure, it is only a form, the man merely taking her in his arms, and moving her gently three times. The writer of this, when young, saw it performed with his own eyes, as the saying is; but in his case the man was not a seventh son, for no such person could be procured. When this difficulty arises, any man who has the character of being lucky, provided he is not married to a red-haired wife, may be called in to give the three shakes. In other and more dangerous cases Rose would send out persons to gather half a dozen heads of blasted barley; and having stripped them of the black fine powder with which they were covered, she would administer it in a little new milk, and this was always attended by the best effects. It is somewhat surprising that the whole Faculty should have adopted this singular medicine in cases of similar difficulty, for in truth it is that which is now administered under the more scientific name of *Ergot of rye*.

In the case before us, the seventh son sustained his reputation for good luck. In about three quarters of an hour Dandy was called in "to kiss a strange young gentleman that wanted to see him." This was an agreeable ceremony to Dandy, as it always is, to catch the first glimpse of one's own first-born. On entering he found Rose sitting beside the bed in all the pomp of authority and pride of success, bearing the infant in her arms, and dandling it up and down, more from habit than any necessity that then existed for doing so.

"Well," said she, "here we are all safe and sound, God willin'; an' if you're not the father of as purty a young man as ever I laid eyes on, I'm not here. Corny Keho, come an' kiss your son, I say."

Corny advanced, somewhat puzzled whether to laugh or cry, and taking the child up with a smile, he kissed it five times—for that is the mystic number—and as he placed it once more in Rose's arms, there was a solitary tear on its cheek.

"Arra, go an' kiss your wife, man alive, an' tell her to have a good heart, an' to be as kind to all her fellow-creatures as God has been to her this night. It isn't upon this world the heart ought to be fixed, for we see how small a thing an' how short a time can take us out of it."

"Oh, bedad," said Dandy, who had now recovered the touch of feeling excited by the child, "it would be too bad if I'd grudge her a smack." He accordingly stooped, and kissed her; but, truth to confess, he did it with a very cool and business-like air. "I know," he proceeded, "that she'll have a heart like a jyant, now that the son is come."

"To be sure she will, an' she must; or if not, I'll play the sorra, an' break things. Well, well, let her get strength a bit first, an' rest and quiet; an' in the mean time get the groanin'-malt ready, until every one in the house drinks the health of the stranger. My soul to happiness, but he's a born beauty. The nerra Keho of you all ever was the aiqualls of what he'll be yet, please God. Troth, Corny, he has daddy's nose upon him, any how. Ay, you may laugh; but, faix, it's thrue. You may take with him, you may own to him, any where. Arra, look at that! My soul to happiness, if one egg's liker another! Eh, my posey! Where was it, alanna? Ay, you're there, my duck o' diamonds! Troth, you'll be the flower o' the flock, so you will. An' now, Mrs Keho, honey, we'll lave you to yourself awhile, till we thrate these poor

\* If it did not happen to be new moon, the words were "good moon," &c.

cratures of sarvints; the likes o' them oughtn't to be over-looked; an' indeed they did feel a great dale itself, poor things, about you; an' moreover they'll be longin' of coorse to see the darlin' here."

Mrs Keho's mother and Rose superintended the birth-treat between them. It is unnecessary to say that the young men and girls had their own sly fun upon the occasion; and now that Dandy's apprehension of danger was over, he joined in their mirth with as much glee as any of them. This being over, they all retired to rest; and honest Mickey M'Sorley went home very *hearty*,\* in consequence of Dandy's grateful sense of the aid he had rendered his wife. The next morning Rose, after dressing the infant and performing all the usual duties that one expected from her, took her leave in these words:—

"Now, Mrs Keho, God bless you an' yours, and take care of yourself. I'll see you agin on Sunday next, when it's to be christened. Until then, throw out no dirty wather before sunrise or afther sunset; an' when Father Molloy is goin' to christen it, let Corny tell him not to forget to christen it *against the fairies*, an' thin it'll be safe. Good bye, ma'am; an' look you to her, Mrs Finnegan," said she, addressing her patient's mother, "an' *banaght lath* till I see all again."

\* Tipsy.

### THE MINSTREL'S WALK.

BY J. U. U.

(To the old Irish air of "Bídh mid a gól sa poga na mban.")

Green hills of the west, where I carolled along  
In the Mayday of life with my harp and my song,  
Though the winter of time o'er my spirit hath rolled,  
And the breast of the minstrel is weary and cold;  
Though no more by those famous old haunts shall I stray,  
Once the themes of my song, and the guides of my way,  
That each had its story, and true-hearted friend,  
Before I forget ye, life's journey shall end!

Oh, 'twas joy in the prime of life's morning to go  
On the tracks of Clan Connell, led on by Hugh Roe,  
O'er the hill of Keisicorran, renowned Ballinote,  
By the Boyle, or by Newport, all passes of note,  
Where the foe their vain armaments haughtily kept;  
But the foot of th' avenger went by while they slept:  
The hills told no tale, but the night-cloud was red,  
And the friends of the Sassenagh quaked at their tread.

By the plains of Rath Croghan, fields famous of yore,  
Though stronghold and seat of the kingly no more,  
By Tulsk and Tomona, hill, valley, and plain,  
To grey Ballintubber, O'Connors' domain;  
While ages rolled backward in lengthened array,  
In song and old story, the long summer day;  
And cloud-like the glories of Connaught rolled by,  
Till they sank in the horrors of grim Athenry!

Through the heaths of Kiltullagh, kind, simple, though rude,  
To Aeluin's bright waters, where Willeborough stood,  
Ballinlough then spoke welcome from many a door,  
Where smiles lit kind faces that now smile no more;  
Then away to the Moyne, o'er the moors of Mayo,  
Still onward, still welcomed by high and by low,  
Blake, Burke, and O'Malley, Lynch, Kirwan, and Browne,  
By forest, lake, mountain, through village and town.

Then kind were the voices that greeted my way,  
'Twas *Cead mille fáille* at closing of day,  
When young hearts beat lightly, and labour was done,  
For joy tracked my steps, as light follows the sun;  
I had tales for the hamlet, and news for the hall,  
And the tune of old times, ever welcome to all,  
The praise of thy glory, dear land of the west;  
But thy praises are still, and thy kind bosoms rest!

My blessing rest with you, dear friends, though no more  
Shall the poor and the weary rejoice at your door;  
Though like stars to your homes I have seen you depart,  
Still ye live, O ye live in each vein of my heart.  
Still the light of your looks on my darkness is thrown,  
Still your voices breathe round me when weary and lone;  
Like shades ye come back with each feeling old strain,  
But the world shall ne'er look on your equals again.

The difference between a rich man and a poor man is this—the former eats when he pleases, the latter when he can get it.—*Sir W. Raleigh.*

### APOLOGUES AND FABLES FROM FOREIGN LANGUAGES.

(Translated for the Irish Penny Journal.)

#### No. VI.—THE REMORSE OF A NIGHT.

The last night of the year was about to expire; the winds, after a day of storminess, had subsided into slumber; the white earth lay outspread, like a shrouded map, under the moon; and innumerable stars arose out from the remotest abysses of heaven, twinkling as brightly as though they had but then begun their existence, and were never to suffer impairment. Eleven o'clock had tolled from the tower of an ancient Gothic church; and as the vibrations died away on the transparent air, an Old Man drew nigh to the window of a dark room in the desolate dwelling of which he had long been the solitary tenant, and cast his dull despairful eyes upwards towards the immoveable firmament, and from thence down on the blank waste of the earth, and then breathed a groaning prayer, that those eyes might never survey that firmament or that earth again. Wretched was he, in truth, that Old Man, beyond all parallel and beyond all consolation—for his grave lay open for him, as it seemed, by his side; it was thinly covered over, not by the flowers of Youth, but by the snows of Age; and when, heartsick of the sight, he looked away from it into himself, he saw that the sole fruits that he had gathered from a long and eventful life were sins, regrets, and maladies—a decayed body, a plague-smitten soul, a bosom full of bitterness, and an old age full of remorse. The beautiful days of his youth now came again before him like ghosts, and resumed to his remembrance the cheerful morning upon which his venerable father had first placed him upon the great Cross-road of Life—a road which, trodden on the right hand, conducts the pilgrim along the noon-day path of Virtue into a spacious, joyous land, abounding in sunbeams, harvests, and angelic spirits, but which, followed on the left, betrays him through lampless and miry ways, into the rueful wildernesses of Vice, where serpents for ever swarm, and pestilence chokes the atmosphere, and to quench his burning thirst the sluggish black rivers yield him but slime and poison.

Alas! the serpents were now coiled about him—the poison was rilling through his heart! Alas for him! he knew too well which road he had chosen—where he was—and what he must undergo—for eternity—for eternity!

With an anguish, with an agony, with a despair, that language cannot even faintly pourtray, he uplifted his withered arms towards heaven, clasped his hands, and cried aloud, O! give me back, give me back my youth! O! my father, lead me once more to the Cross-road, that I may once more choose, and this time choose with foreknowledge!

But his cries wasted themselves idly upon the frozen air, for his father was no more, and his youth was no more—both had alike long, long ago vanished, never to reappear. He knew this, and he wept—yes, that miserable old man wept; but his tears relieved him not; they were like drops of hot lava, for they trickled from a burning brain.

He looked forth, and he saw flitting lights—wills-o'-the-wisp—dancing over the morasses and becoming extinguished in the burial-grounds; and he said, Such were my riotous days of folly! He again looked forth, and he beheld a star fall from heaven to earth, and there melt away in blackness that left no trace behind, and he said, I am that star!—and with that woeful thought were torn open anew the leprous wounds in his bosom which the serpents that clung around him would never suffer to be healed.

His morbid imagination, wandering abroad till it touched on the confines of frenzy, showed him figures of sleep-walkers traversing like shadows the roofs of the houses:—the chimneys widened into furnaces vomiting forth flames and monsters—the windmills lifted up their giant arms, and threatened to crush him—and a forgotten spectre, left behind in a deserted charnel-house, glared on him with a horrible expression of malignity, and then mocked his terror by assuming his features.

On a sudden there flowed out upon the air a deep, rich, and solemn stream of music. It came from the steeple of the old Gothic church, as the bells announced the birth of the new year, for it was now the twelfth hour. Its cadences fell with a thrilling distinctness upon the ear and the heart of the Old Man; and every tone in the melody, through the agency of that mysterious power which sound possesses of re-assembling within the forsaken halls of the soul images long departed,